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THE ARMY MEDICAL SERVICE MEAT AND DAIRY HYGIENE SCHOOL

To many readers, mention of a famed sister service of the Quartermaster Corps—the US Army Veterinary Corps—may conjure up visions of dust-caked cavalry patrols returning to lonely frontier posts or of pack mule trains struggling up tortuous mountain trails—for such “romantic” military lore is in the tradition and, indeed, in the very name of the Veterinary Corps. As a matter of fact, however, the modern Corps is as different from its counterpart of the Indian Wars or even of World War I as today’s Army is unlike the forces that fought at Bull Run. While it is true that the Veterinary Corps still maintains responsibility for the care of the limited number of pack animals in use today (some “Army mules” are now serving in Korea), its major mission—as part of the Office of The Surgeon General—is in the inspection of all meat and dairy products procured for the Army, and, when necessary, for the Navy. In performing this vital mission, it discharges a twofold responsibility: (1) to protect the financial interests of the Government, and (2) to protect the health of the troops.

Naturally, in order to perform so complicated a task, a considerable amount of specialized training is required for both officers and enlisted men. In the following article, Col. Lancaster explains the program and activities of the “post-graduate” School for Veterinary Corps personnel located at the Chicago Quartermaster Depot.

Since its establishment, the Veterinary Corps has been charged with the responsibility of inspecting all foods of animal origin which are to be utilized for the sustenance of military personnel. At the time of its inception, the activities of the Veterinary Corps were somewhat limited due to the practice of procuring subsistence items locally, or at least within reasonable hauling distances of the using installation. This was necessary because of the lack of adequate in-transit refrigeration with which to preserve the highly perishable meat items. How-

ever, the advent of two World Wars during this period, with attendant increases in the size of the Armed Forces, resulted in a parallel increase in the inspection duties assumed by the Veterinary Corps. It was no longer possible to procure sufficient quantities of foods in the immediate vicinity of the consuming installation; consequently, procurement activities had to be transferred to the large meat packing and processing centers. Concurrent with this transfer of procurement activities, personnel of the Veterinary Corps were relocated in order

to insure the quality and wholesomeness of the food items then being procured in tremendous quantities. This change also brought with it a new system of inspection. Items could no longer be procured and consumed on a daily basis with only one inspection prior to purchase; subsistence had to be inspected prior to purchase, during processing, prior to shipment, upon receipt at destination, in storage, and prior to issue to troops. The Veterinary Corps expanded to assume these new responsibilities and personnel had to be more thoroughly trained.

The global scope of World War II seriously limited the use of fresh or frozen meat items in the diets of military personnel in certain theaters of operation. Some method of providing these dietary necessities had to be developed in a minimum of time. This became the responsibility of the QM Food and Container Institute. With the cooperation of technical experts from industry, this monumental challenge was met and the problem was quickly and successfully solved—adequate canned subsistence was provided members of the United States Armed Forces throughout the world. This vastly enlarged program, however, required additional know-how on the part of Veterinary Corps personnel in order to efficiently discharge their basic responsibility and fulfill the dual objectives of the Corps; namely: (1) to protect the financial interests of the Government, and (2) to protect the health of troops from diseases transmitted through spoiled, damaged, and contaminated foods.

watchdog role of the veterinary corps

Since the conclusion of World War II, the QM Food and Container

Institute has been actively engaged in development of new types of rations and in improvement of those rations already in use by the Armed Forces. All of the research expended in this effort, however, would be of little avail if (1) the nutritional adequacy of the ration is reduced through the use of inferior ingredients, (2) the acceptability of the ration is impaired through improper processing, (3) the stability of the ration is decreased through improper handling or inadequate storage, or (4) the utility of the ration is impaired by improper or inadequate packaging. Representatives of the Veterinary Corps are responsible for insuring that the above four cardinal requirements are met in every detail. Further consideration of these four principles will reveal an exceedingly important phase of the Veterinary Corps mission. The Medical Service's recognition of this is attested to by the continuing and amplified training program which keeps personnel of the Veterinary Service abreast of the demands made upon them.

why the need for the school

Officer students of the Army Medical Service Meat and Dairy Hygiene School, all of whom are graduate veterinarians, possess a comprehensive knowledge of scientific subjects, particularly those of a biologic nature. However, in most instances the individual has had little opportunity to apply these talents in the fields of food processing and food sanitation. Therefore, the staff of the School endeavors to properly channel these basic talents so that the student will gradually appreciate the gravity of the specialized duty to which he will be assigned upon graduation. The staff fully realizes that it is impossible to develop, within the period of time

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STAFF OF THE MEAT AND DAIRY HYGIENE SCHOOL

Seated (left to right)—Capt. R. Leaphart; Lt. Col. H. R. Lancaster, commandant; Lt. Col. G. D. Batchelder.
Standing (left to right)—Maj. T. A. S. Hays; Maj. W. G. Brooks; Maj. E. P. Hornickel; Capt. J. S. Zwiers; Maj. G. F. Dixon.

allotted to training, experts in all phases of food technology. However, the School has been successful in developing a great number of individuals who are sufficiently informed to become efficient inspectors after a relatively short period of on-the-job training.

Theory without practicable application is useless, and may be dangerous if possessed by individuals who do not develop the modifying quality of common sense. Throughout the course presented in the Meat and Dairy Hygiene School, the staff relies heavily upon industry for demonstrations, conducted tours, and special lectures by key personnel. This cooperation has created an ideal situation wherein both industry and the Armed Forces have come

to develop a common understanding of each other's problems for the benefit of all. It is this element of cooperativeness, more than anything else, that the staff of the School hopes to imprint on the minds of the students so that inspector-contractor relationships will never recede from the high level which has been attained. The basic knowledge of industrial techniques is initiated in the instructions given in the Meat and Dairy Hygiene School; it is further amplified and clarified during field trips; and is fully consummated through application, study, and observation. The staff of the School hold foremost the axiom, "A well-informed inspector is an efficient inspector."

From the preceding statements it is not difficult to see that early in

its existence the Veterinary Corps found it necessary to establish central facilities for the training of Veterinary personnel in the intricacy of food inspection. However, the first attempts were rather meager and food inspection enjoyed only a minor role in the over-all training program.

development of the school

The first Veterinary School of Meat and Dairy Hygiene was established by War Department Circular No. 271, dated 16 July 1920, at the General Supply Depot, Chicago, Illinois. This school was short-lived and was transferred to the Army Medical Center, Washington, D. C., on or about 7 July 1923, to become the Army Veterinary School.

Until the Army Veterinary School was designated as a Special Service School by War Department directive, dated 31 July 1940, formal training in food inspection was limited to incoming regular Veterinary officers and to relatively small groups of enlisted men of the Veterinary Service. This was the period during which subsistence procurement was substantially on a local basis. However, during the period of emergency following the issuance of this directive, rapid development took place and on 25 November 1940, the Meat and Dairy Hygiene School started its first officer course in the Chicago QM Depot. This initial class was composed of 17 officers. The course extended for a period of 30 days during which time 166 hours were devoted to classroom instruction and field trips. Forty per cent of this course was devoted to instructions concerning the inspection of carcass meats, the most predominant items of procurement at that time. The balance of the course was equally divided among such subjects as bacon and ham,

fancy meats, sausage, cheese, butter, canned products (principally salmon), milk, poultry, eggs, and post-mortem technique.

The 50th class which commenced on 22 July 1946 was increased in length to 53 days and covered, in addition to the subjects mentioned above, such subjects as refrigeration, boneless beef, inspection of establishment, food poisoning, fats and oils, dehydrated milk, ice cream, seafoods, and warehousing. This class was attended by 12 officers.

present program of instruction

At the present time the 78th class, consisting of 35 officers, is in training. This class will receive a total of 440 hours of instruction, field trips, and industrial demonstrations. The following subjects are presented: milk and milk products (66 hours), carcass and boneless beef (33 hours), eggs (31 hours), pork and pork products (20 hours), poultry (21 hours), seafoods (15 hours), canning (15 hours), fats and oils (10 hours), sausage (10 hours), and miscellaneous subjects including dry warehousing, refrigeration, establishment inspection, forms and records, ice cream, military orientation, contractor-officer relationship, organization of the Army, etc. A total of 47 hours is allotted to guest speakers from the following agencies:

- Food and Drug Administration,
FSA
- Public Health Service, FSA
- Fish and Wildlife Service, USDA
- Bureau of Animal Industry,
USDA
- Production and Marketing Administration, USDA
- QM Food and Container Institute
for the Armed Forces, R&D
Div., OQMG
- Headquarters, QM Market Center
System, Chicago

third quarter, october, 1952

QM Inspection Service Division,
CQMD
New York QM Procurement
Agency, QMIS National Office
Army Medical Illustration Service,
Army Institute of Pathology
Army Commissary, Fort Sheridan,
Illinois
QM Subsistence School, CQMD
Medical Nutrition Laboratory,
OSG
Medical Field Service School,
OSG
Evaporated Milk Association
Association of American Railroads
American Can Company
Michigan State College
University of Wisconsin
University of Chicago
Union Stock Yards Association
American Veterinary Medical
Association
American Meat Institute
Ford Foundation
Associate Films
National Wooden Box Association

In keeping with the basic policy of practical application of classroom study, approximately 40 per cent of the total time is devoted to field trips. This is accomplished through the cooperation of the following industrial establishments:

Armour and Company
A & P Company
Beatrice Foods Company
Bowman Dairy Company
Albert E. Burhop, Inc.
Campbell Soup Company
Carnation Milk Company
Central Cold Storage Company
Central Ice Cream Company
Chicago Guernsey Farm, Inc.
Cloverleaf Dairy
Continental Freezers of Illinois,
Inc.
Dean Milk Company
Durkee Famous Foods

Fulton Market Cold Storage
Company
Kraft Foods Company
Lakeshire-Marty Company
Libby, McNeill, & Libby
B. Schwartz & Company
Shapiro Fisheries, Inc.
Sherman-White Produce
Company
Swift & Company
Wilson & Company

To date, 1480 officers have been graduated from the Army Medical Service Meat and Dairy Hygiene School, or its predecessor institutions.

enlisted course

The Meat and Dairy Hygienist Course for enlisted personnel was started at the present school on 3 December 1945. This course was formerly given at the Medical Training Center, William Beaumont General Hospital, El Paso, Texas. The first class consisted of seven students who pursued a course of instruction for a period of six weeks. At the present time the enlisted classes are limited to 50 specially selected students and extends for eight weeks. The course of study given to the enlisted students is essentially the same as that presented to the officer students, except that it is somewhat more elementary. The School endeavors to supply the Veterinary technicians with sufficient information so they can perform an efficient inspection service under officer guidance. From the 30 enlisted classes thus far conducted a total of 1361 Veterinary technicians have been graduated to take their places alongside the Veterinary officers to whose charge they are committed.

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Meat and Dairy Hygiene School*